

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5599  
USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 10750

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, EFIN, IT, US  
SUBJECT: ANDREOTTI VISIT, PART IV, PUBLIC AFFAIRS ASPECTS

1. ONE OF THE BASIC ITALIAN OBJECTIVES OF THE WASHINGTON TRIP IS TO ENHANCE THE IMAGE OF THE PM AND OF THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. OBSERVERS OFTEN NOTE THAT THIS IMAGE SUFFERS IN THE U.S. MEDIA FROM THE VERY FACT OF ANDREOTTI'S 30 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE ("TIRED LEADERSHIP"); FROM THE FACT THAT ANDREOTTI IS THE ONLY MAJOR LEADER IN WESTERN EUROPE WHO DOES NOT SPEAK ENGLISH, WHICH ADDS TO THE IMPRESSION AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES (SUCH AS THE LONDON SUMMIT) THAT ITALY IS SOMEHOW LESS THAN A FULL-FLEDGED MEMBER OF THE FIRST TEAM; FROM THE REPUTATION OF "INEPTITUDE" OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RISING INFLUENCE OF THE PCI. (THE FAILURE OF DC LEADERS TO RESPOND TO INTERVIEW REQUESTS OF MAJOR U.S. JOURNALISTS VISITING ROME IS PARTLY TO BLAME FOR THIS; BUT ANDREOTTI HAS BECOME MORE ACTIVE IN THIS AREA RECENTLY, WITH GOOD RESULTS. SIMILARLY, THE DC MISSED AN IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE A PARTY SPOKESMAN AT THE RECENT WASHINGTON CONFERENCE ON "ITALY AND EUROCOMMUNISM").

2. IT SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND THAT THE ANDREOTTI VISIT  
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IS A MAJOR STORY IN ITALY, AND ITALIAN JOURNALISTS/ COMMENTATORS IN BOTH COUNTRIES CAN BE EXPECTED TO LOOK FOR SIGNS OF U.S. STANCE -- EVEN WHEN NO SIGNALS ARE INTENDED.

3. WE HAVE SUGGESTED TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR (LA ROCCA) THAT THE PM MEET IN ROME WITH

SELECTED U.S. NEWS CORRESPONDENTS, BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE  
--IN TIME FOR THEM TO FILE THEIR STORIES IN ADVANCE  
OF ANDREOTTI'S ARRIVAL, HOPEFULLY CREATING A FAVORABLE  
ATMOSPHERE FOR THE VISIT. LA ROCCA SAYS THEY PLAN TO  
ARRANGE SOME PRE-DEPARTURE INTERVIEW.

4. REGARDING ACTIVITIES IN THE U.S., THE GOI HAS ALREADY  
DECIDED THAT ANDREOTTI WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR A  
SPEECH AT THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB. WE HAD ALSO DISCUSSED  
THE POSSIBILITY OF HIS GOING TO NEW YORK AFTER THE  
WASHINGTON VISIT TO MAKE APPROPRIATE CONTACTS THERE,  
INCLUDING A POSSIBLE INVITATION FROM THE COUNCIL ON  
FOREIGN RELATIONS. HOWEVER, AT NEW YORK VISIT WILL NOT  
BE POSSIBLE, WE ARE INFORMED, BECAUSE THE PRIME MINISTER  
IS TO VISIT OTTAWA DIRECTLY AFTER WASHINGTON.

5. ANDREOTTI WILL SEE ITALIAN CORRESPONDENTS WHILE IN  
WASHINGTON, AND LA ROCCA HAS AFFIRMED THAT THE PM WILL  
BE AVAILABLE ALSO TO SELECTED U.S. MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES,  
PERHAPS AT A WORKING BREAKFAST. CONSIDERING THE GENERAL  
INTEREST IN WESTERN EUROPEAN COMMUNISM AND ITALY'S ROLE  
THEREIN, IT MAY BE THAT THE WASHINGTON POST MIGHT WISH  
TO INVITE HIM TO APPEAR BEFORE THEIR EDITORIAL BOARD; OR  
AN INVITATION FROM ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL TV INTERVIEW  
SHOWS MIGHT BE ARRANGED, THOUGH INTERPRETATION WOULD BE  
NECESSARY.

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6. RECOMMENDATION: A) WHILE WE UNDERSTAND THAT  
THESE ADDITIONAL IDEAS FROM MEDIA EXPOSURE HAVE BEEN  
CONSIDERED WITHIN THE GOI, WE SUGGEST THAT DEPARTMENT/USIA  
FOLLOW UP WITH THE ITALIAN EMBASSY. B) DEPARTMENT/USIA  
MIGHT SEEK OCCASIONS TO REMIND U.S. OR THIRD-COUNTRY  
JOURNALISTS THAT WHILE "COMMUNISTS IN ITALY" THEME IS  
EASIEST FOR GRABBING HEADLINES, THERE IS ALSO IMPORTANT  
STORY IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF ITALY'S POSITIVE ACHIEVEMENTS,  
INCLUDING CURRENT ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE, AND ITS  
IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE ALLIANCE. C) WE RECOMMEND  
THAT THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE REGARDING ANDREOTTI VISIT  
REFLECT CONCRETE INITIATIVES IN SPECIFIC FIELDS, ALONG LINES  
SUGGESTED IN OUR CABLE ON OBJECTIVES/RECOMMENDATIONS  
(PART III).

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## Message Attributes

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